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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS
WASHINGTON, D. C.

May 17, 1946

Winter Cover Crop Seed Acreage This Year
About Same As In 1945. Yields Expected Good

Acreage of winter cover-crop seeds is indicated to be about the same this year as last, but slightly smaller than the 1940-44 average, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics announced today. An estimated 356,000 acres of Austrian Winter peas, vetch, and ryegrass seed will be harvested this year, compared with 355,000 in 1945, and the 5-year average of 373,550 acres. The increased acreage of ryegrass seed is expected to offset the decreased acreages of Austrian Winter peas and vetch seed.

Generally speaking, condition of winter cover crops was good on May 1, and averaged slightly better than last year. Damage to crops from winterkilling was very small, and injury from insects was probably smaller than usual. It was a little too dry, however, during April in the principal vetch sections of Oregon and California, but this condition was improved by the rains that fell early in May.

Another small acreage of Austrian Winter peas is to be harvested this year. This year's acreage is estimated at 46,000 acres, compared with 50,000 in 1945, and the 1940-44 average of 92,840 acres. Decreases in acreage indicated this year for Oregon, Washington, and California are nearly offset by the expected increase in Idaho. The May 1 condition of 95 percent of normal is the best in the 7 years these condition figures are available.

Acreage of hairy-vetch seed this year is estimated at 61,900 acres, compared with 67,400 in 1945, and the average of 109,260 acres. If, however, more volunteer crops are harvested than expected, the 1946 acreage may be about the same as the 1945 acreage. Better control of weevil by the more extensive use of DDT is expected to affect the acreage saved for seed, and also the yield per acre. The 93-percent condition on May 1 is better than that of last year, also better than usual, but below that of 1944.

Acreage of common and Willamette vetch is expected to break the record 1945 acreage of 98,000 acres by at least 1,000 acres, and to be 71 percent above the average of 57,790 acres. Condition of these vetches, while very good at 94 percent, was a little below the May condition of the 1944 crop.

Acreage of purple vetch for seed is estimated at 36,100 acres, the same as in 1945, but 77 percent larger than the average of 20,320 acres. Although dry weather and high temperatures in California during most of April had a detrimental effect on this crop, prospects on May 1 were for fairly good yields. The 77-percent condition on that date compares with 80 last year and 87 in May 1944.

The Hungarian-vetch acreage, estimated at 7,000 acres, both this year and last, is 29 percent below the average. Condition on May 1 was very good -- 96 percent.

Prospective acreage of ryegrass seed, estimated at 106,000 acres, is 10 percent larger than the record 1945 acreage of 96,500, and 27 percent larger than the average. The May 1 condition of 95 percent is better than usual, and slightly better than that of last year.

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ACREAGE AND CONDITION OF WINTER COVER CROP SEEDS

State	Acreage harvested			Condition 1/		
	Average	1945	Indicated	1944	1945	1946
	1940-44	1945	1946	1944	1945	1946
	Acres			Percent		

AUSTRIAN WINTER PEAS

Oregon	55,400	28,000	18,000	90	95	94
Washington	13,100	8,000	4,000	97	85	90
Idaho	13,860	10,000	22,000	99	95	99
California	8,700	4,000	2,000	76	64	70
North Dakota	1,780	--	--	93	--	--
United States	92,840	50,000	46,000	91	91	95

HAIRY VETCH

Oregon	96,200	54,000	46,000	96	95	95
Washington	3,200	1,000	500	92	90	85
Michigan	1,960	1,600	1,400	98	89	86
Arkansas	7,900	10,800	14,000	86	71	86
United States	109,260	67,400	61,900	94	91	93

COMMON AND WILLAMETTE VETCH

Oregon	51,470	92,000	95,000	99	96	94
Washington	6,320	6,000	4,000	81	87	85
United States	57,790	98,000	99,000	98	95	94

PURPLE VETCH

California	17,200	34,000	34,000	86	79	76
Oregon and Wash.	3,120	2,100	2,100	95	93	99
United States	20,320	36,100	36,100	87	80	77

HUNGARIAN VETCH

Oregon	9,900	7,000	7,000	98	98	96
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TOTAL VETCH

(Hairy, Common, Willamette, Purple and Hungarian)

United States	197,270	208,500	204,000	95	91	91
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COMMON RYEGRASS

Oregon	70,200	80,000	90,000	98	93	95
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PERENNIAL RYEGRASS

Oregon	13,240	16,500	16,000	94	98	95
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1/ May 1 condition in 1945 and 1946; May 15 in 1944.